



Streamlined Solar Permitting

WHAT IS IT?

Solar Permitting is a process in which a person seeking to install solar panels or a small solar array on their property gets permission from his or her local government to do the installation in accordance with local building and zoning laws. Depending on the state, local government, type and size of the system, the permitting process can require significant time and cost, with both residential and commercial systems. Studies have shown that soft costs, including the costs of permitting and inspection, are representing an increasing share of the overall price of a residential solar system. A streamlined process can effectively and efficiently meet the needs of both the installer and the local government.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Direct and indirect costs from solar permitting add about \$7,000 (\$1.00 per watt) to the cost of an average residential solar energy system. These costs include the direct cost of permit application, inspection, and interconnection fees, as well as indirect costs such as physical trips for permitting and inspections, completing and submitting permit applications. A streamlined and cost-effective permitting process for installations can increase solar deployment and improve customer relations with citizens while ensuring safety and compliance with local building, electrical and zoning codes.

BENEFITS



A [report](#) released by SunRun shows that a standardized permitting process for residential systems could reduce costs by **\$1 billion over 5 years.**



A streamlined process can save **time, money and training for code officials and utility employees.**



Potential for economic increase in solar jobs: Vermont enacted standardized permitting and saw a **four-fold increase in solar installations in 3 years, and earning the status of number one in solar jobs per capita in the nation.**

HOW CAN COMMUNITIES IMPLEMENT THIS POLICY?

Communities looking to become more solar friendly can start by making solar permitting available online and implement modern technology for their plan review and inspection processes. Communities can also look to programs like SolSmart, which provide [technical expertise](#), [toolkits](#) and recognition to help streamline permitting and make a community more solar friendly.